

THE SAFETY CLAUSE



DCMC's FLIGHT OPERATIONS INTERNET NEWS LETTER, EDITION IX

December 1998

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Yes boys and girls. It's another edition of The Safety Clause (SC). I know we just published one last month, but as you will no doubt recall, we've decided to adhere to a ridged new publishing schedule of publishing *whenever we feel like it*. This decision has gained widespread and universal approval by me. It came to me in a dream actually. One of those dreams where you're back in high school and you can't find your classroom... you haven't studied... there's a big exam... you're not wearing any clothes... Cindy Crawford is chasing you with a... sorry, sorry. I was inadvertently mixing up my dreams and my metaphors. I've got to start laying off that Jack Daniel's. But that's not important right now. What is important is, last month's issue was getting too long so I decided to break it down into two separate editions. This decision was based on an Air War College study which indicated that your average APT member's attention span would

get him or her through 20 pages of text max, before,

- a) they'd chew their arm off to escape from the computer screen, or
- b) they'd fall asleep and hit their heads on the keyboard permanently imprinting the keys' letters into their foreheads.

And so, editions VIII and IX were scientifically shortened for your protection.



What's the most rewarding thing about being an aviator? Well, I'll tell you. It's not the joy of slipping the surly bonds of earth, it's not the flight pay, or the babes, or even the cool leather jacket they gave me... it's the warm fuzzy feeling you get when they publish one of your articles in The Safety Clause.

You may have noticed we've added a Safety Clause Master Table of Contents to our web page. This will allow our readers to easily find articles they only vaguely remember reading *thanks to years of professional psychiatric counseling*. And, as you can clearly see, to assist you in finding articles within each Safety Clause we've also added an internal Table of Contents, which we'll include in later editions of the Safety Clause.

Another really cool thing we've added to the Safety Clause is *sound*, in the form of "*.wav" files. A *.wav file contains digitally encoded sound something like the sound found on CDs. If you're viewing this in Word and you have a sound board installed you can hear the sound by double clicking with your left mouse button wherever you see the following image ⇒🔊⇐. Adding sound is just one of the many multi-media advances we will be employing in the future to enhance your reading (and now listening) experience.

Moving right along, several of you out there in APT land still owe me articles. Paul Shevlin sent me two recently... an "a" and a "the" which I didn't find very amusing. I was expecting several *entire paragraphs* on the Mugu-Mojave debacle from him. (Remember Paul, I may not have anything to do with your future in DCMC, but I do have access to a newsletter and I'm more than willing to use it to pick on you.) And that goes double to the rest of you out there who owe me articles. Don't push me... this keyboard's loaded🔊.

FYI

-Lt Col John Heib

Following a review of DCMC Flight Ops by Air Force Material Command's Operations and Safety divisions, a major shakeup in our organization is occurring. The review was conducted at DCMC Pemco, Birmingham, AL. And by the way, many accolades and thanks to all the guys at DCMC Pemco for their support in the review. They're doing an terrific job there despite, to put it mildly... their adverse working conditions. They had AFMC, DCMC-OI, and each District CFO deep in their knickers and came out smelling like a rose. The results of our review of their Pre-Mishap Plan were particularly noteworthy. We started by killing off virtually all the flight ops guys, and then questioned the only remaining survivor, SMSgt Jimmy Berryman, at length... sans rubber hose and bright light of course. With a little help from the rest of the flight ops guys (from beyond the grave, if you will) SMSgt Berryman clearly demonstrated the hard work that went into developing their well thought out plan.

The AFMC guys found we were doing outstanding work in the flight ops and safety

arenas despite some organizational hurdles. When they briefed their findings to Major General Malishenko, October 30th, he made the decision then-and-there to eliminate those hurdles. Fortunately, as it turns out, the Contract Operations Directorate here at DCMC headquarters, was already preparing to reorganize (see the Random Notes section of Edition VI for a clarification on the purpose behind their reorg.). This fortuitous alignment of the planets will result in Flight Operations' removal from the "O" Directorate, placing us directly under the Commander. Hence forth, we will now, no longer be known as Flight Operations, Specialized Safety and Environmental; we will now be known only as Flight Operations... ni🔊. Specialized safety is being moved to Technical Operations, AKA *the Organization Formerly Known as Product Assurance*. Environmental is being moved under a group to be named later and a first round draft pick in the next reorganization. Per General Malishenko, the District Headquarters will mirror our new organizational structure, at least as Flight Ops is concerned. That is, the District CFOs will report directly to their Commanders.

How will this effect the APT concept? Theoretically, it won't. Safety Specialists will still be an integral part of the APT, they'll just do it matrixed from a different organization. We will, however, have to work out a few details with the new Safety Specialist leadership. This should not be difficult since this sort of relationship between APT members is already quite common. Kaman Aerospace located in Bloomfield Connecticut, for example, has a GFR and AMM located in Boston (pronounced *Bah-sten*) working at District East HQ, and a SS located and working for DCMC Hartford.

What will our new office symbol be? Well, despite Flea's suggestion to call us DCMC-AIR, my recommendation that we go with DCMC-~~AF~~, or the rumor from my car-pool that we'll just go by, "The DCMC-Flight Dudes," our new symbol will be **DCMC-AF**.



We wish to state categorically, right here and now, that AF does not stand for either Air Force or Air Falvey... as far as you know.

The ultimate practical upshot to this change will be greater Commander involvement in Flight Operations, and more time spent dealing directly with flight operations related issues.

LIFE ON THE EASTERN FRONT

-LT COL MIKE CLOVER

ROUTINE

Webster's defines "**routine**" as the habitual or mechanical performance of an established procedure. In our world, that usually equates to a contractor accomplishing some type of "routine" maintenance on an aircraft. Likewise, many of you well know that this maintenance can be anything but **routine**!

Take for instance this example – weighing an aircraft. Recently, several workers began towing a C-9 off the aircraft scales after performing a weight and balance check. On the surface, this seems relatively tame, a routine procedure. However, when everything was said and done, the aircraft's tail section was damaged to the tune of \$17,000 plus (parts and labor).



What happened during this routine maintenance procedure? For starters, the contractor employees thought that "moving" an aircraft from the set of scales was **not** a towing operation. The workers honestly felt that they were only moving the aircraft and not really towing it. (STRIKE 1)

As such, no one was on board the aircraft to "ride" the brakes as the C-9 began to leave the scales. Worth noting, GFR-approved

contractor procedures specifically call for a “brake rider” during any aircraft towing operation. (STRIKE 2)

Finally, “Murphy’s Law” entered the picture by having the tow bar’s lug pin shear. This allowed the unmanned aircraft to roll down the ramp from the scales and impact the hangar doors. The aircraft’s tail section (right and left elevator) received extensive damage from the collision. (STRIKE 3 – You’re OUT!)

This mishap clearly illustrates that anything we do in aviation – whether in the air or on the ground – is not **routine**, but *inherently risky*! What can we learn from this incident? Simply this: despite 80 years of aviation and 50 years of jet engines, there is never anything routine about working near or putting aircraft in the air. Every time we deviate from established procedures, we increase the odds of failure. Every time we hit the start button, we start a small explosion. Every time we fly, we’re defying gravity. We need to keep this in mind every single time we deal with these complicated flying machines. Nothing can be treated as routine in aviation!



I’m telling you, with our increased workload you’ve got to be creative. Last year using this baby, I cooked an entire Four-Course Flightline Thanksgiving dinner in under 45 seconds.

So far in FY 99, we’ve had five mishaps... four of them by simply ground handling aircraft. Notice any trends? More

importantly, what could be labeled as routine aircraft maintenance, has turned into a Rocky Horror Picture show. I’m just thankful that we’ve only bent some metal and escaped injuring someone... knock on carbon-fiber composite.

To reverse this negative trend, I’ll remind everyone of General Malishenko’s tasking: Develop an ORM strategy. Let’s start by “teaming” with the contractor to examine his/her aircraft ground handling processes! Take one monthly process (e.g., towing, jacking, etc.) and perform a risk analysis of it. I’m certain you may be surprised by results.

Key here, is taking the routine and focusing on the unique aspects of the operation. Soon you’ll agree that everything we do in and around aircraft requires special attention to details. When finished, you’ll have an ORM-certified process that has mitigated the risk to its lowest level. Sounds like a plan for success to me.

As I’m fond of saying, “Aim high, but always check six!”

AMM NEWS

-CMSgt. Herbert c. Rhay Jr.

Hello, my name is Chief Herb Rhay and yes it’s true, I’m a cone head 🦑. I’m a pneudraulics troop from the world of missiles, warheads and satellites. My last job was senior enlisted advisor (now called Command Chief Master Sergeant) for the Space and Missile Systems Center in AFMC.

Since my arrival, I’ve had the water hose treatment to accelerate my learning of the aircraft business. I can now locate 100 yards

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of flight line and point you in the right direction for obtaining “prop-wash”. I can even change oil in a wide variety of vortex generators. I’ve been a good listener with exceptional teachers such as Chiefs Mac, Marshal and Knight. I’ve even learned from Sergeants Snead, Dillard and Goldstein (better known as Junior). I’ve been fortunate to have the opportunity to tap the wisdom of these AMMs because most of them are really old. One of them was an AMM before the age of powered flight. In fact, he was the AMM for Ben Franklin’s kite.

These AMMs built the AMM program from scratch. They designed the AMM course and guided DCMC’s efforts to turn the APT concept into a reality. As they prepare to retire or move on to other assignments, they have made it known that we must keep the program going *and* take it to another level. Our recent realignment is in the right direction and will definitely affect the AMM’s role. We will strive to expand and institutionalize AMM training to include Acquisition 101, Contracting 101, Production and Quality Management 101, ISO 9000 and a few safety courses. We will also strive for funding at the district level to send seasoned AMMs to spend a week with new AMMs with similar programs. All this is needed to build a quality OJT program that produces a 100% capable and mission ready AMM. They have given us this direction knowing it won’t be easy. It wasn’t easy to build an AMM program from scratch but, they succeeded, and we need to give it our best effort as they have.

In addition, I’ve been given the additional duty of DCMC Senior Enlisted Advisor. DCMC has been highly effective in finding and hiring the best troops in DoD. I can’t say we share the same effectiveness when it

comes to taking care of their careers. Maj Gen Malishenko is aware, concerned, and taking action. The fact that he appointed a SEA is proof that he means business. He has a new recognition program on the horizon, and he’s evaluating the feasibility of becoming the senior rater for E-7s and above. I’m scheduled to brief the General and his commanders in Jan ‘99 on enlisted issues and concerns. I will address enlisted promotions, performance reports, decorations, training, recognition, and military morale. Gen Malishenko is going to help us— not spoon feed us. We, the DCMC enlisted force, must be a big part of the solution to our problems. All the Air Force Chiefs are willing to help and I’ve had some Army and Air Force E-8s come on line as well. We must care for those who may not directly work for, or with us. It’s time to give RHIP a new meaning. Rank Has Its Paperwork, Price, Problems and Pain (pick one)— save the Privileges for the troops.



Known to be very people-oriented... here in his final official act before coming to DCMC, Chief Rhay arranges for a retirement orientation flight for Chief Penman

I’m proud to be in the military and I refuse to listen to those who say “your not in the Air Force any more— your in DLA now”. That’s bull! I’m no civilian and DLA is not a branch of Service! I know the meaning of esprit de corps, unit pride and unit cohesion and I detect these things in Flight Ops. We must work extra hard to keep our military customs and traditions in tact or we’ll become civilians with a very limited

wardrobe. I'm proud to be in Flight Ops because of its mission and the military troops making it happen. I look forward to working with and for you in the future.

QUESTIONS FROM THE TRENCHES

In our continuing effort to lull you into believing I actually know what I'm doing, I've saved several emails that pose problems that some of you may find, directly relate to your operations. These messages contain actual answers (some of which I copied from the back of a set of instructions *written in Japanese* for assembling a blender).

The following question came from the formerly very hard working, Frances (Fran) Viney, who, at the time, was still working for DCMC as a Safety Specialist. She has since left Government employment, but her legacy lives on... at least in this article. She writes,

I'm in the process of writing the final mishap notification message for the B-2 FODded engine that occurred last month. I received figures from Edwards AFB (who repaired the engine) that amount to \$X (parts + labor + test run). MSgt Al Price (AMM at B-2) wants me to add in the contractor's labor cost for removal/replacement of the FODded engine which amounts to \$Y. I don't want to break down the hours for each effort because then I would be sending out proprietary information. In the past, we used the replacement engine cost from the old AFR 127-4 and just plugged that number in for the "repair/replacement costs" and used the \$16 rate for man-hours. Should I just ignore the contractor hours and costs or what?

My response, 🙄... MSgt Price is correct. However, IAW standard practices, there is no need to place a *true* cost of the damage to Government property. Take a look at this excerpt from DLAI 8200.4

H. PROPERTY DAMAGE:

1. Government:
 - a. Narrative Description:
 - b. Material Damage Repair or Replacement Costs:
 - c. Estimated Man-hours to Repair:

H.1.b. refers to the total cost for parts and material that went towards repairing the engine. H.1.c. refers to the total number man-hours. That includes all maintenance man-hours involved in the repair, including engine removal man-hours. The instruction doesn't require or ask for "actual" costs, just the cost for parts and material and the number of man-hours involved.

As you indicated, the standard man-hour rate for "mishap reporting purposes only" is \$16. This figure comes from DoDI 6055.7. When the Services receive one of our mishap notification reports, they take the man-hour figures, multiply them by \$16, and add that figure to the material costs and use the total to determine the mishap's classification. You should do the same when you're making a Mishap Notification determination. For example, let's say you have a mishap that costs \$17,500 to repair (\$5,000 parts and material + \$12,500 (250 hours at \$50/hr.)). \$17,500 is way above the notification threshold of \$10,000, but this mishap may not be reportable regardless. That's because 250 hrs. X \$16/hr. = \$4,000. When you add in parts and material we're now at \$9,000, \$1,000 below the notification threshold. Unless some other criteria exists from the mishap (i.e. injury, high public interest), which we should never discount,

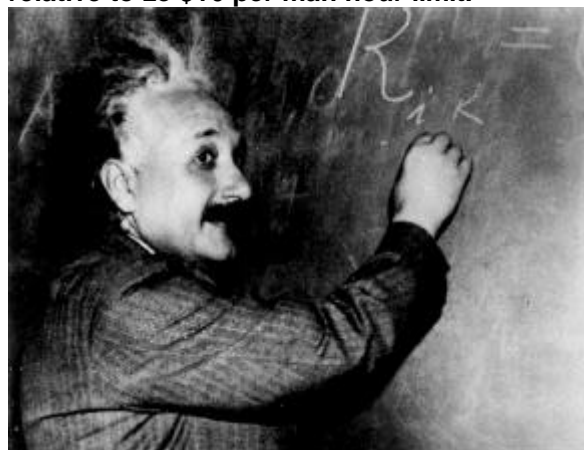
this mishap would not be reportable. The reason we use "Mishap Math" rather than real numbers is to prevent inflationary creep in the mishap rates. And you can forget about AFR 127-4, it's been replaced by AFI 91-204. The new instruction doesn't even include replacement cost figures for aircraft or engines. Even if 127-4 is on your contract, I wouldn't recommend using its figures for mishap reporting. You're better off using the current processes for determining costs; just add a note with the figures stating where the numbers came from, that way there'll be no confusion. You can get aircraft replacement cost figures for Air Force aircraft off the web at: www.saffm.hq.af.mil/SAFFM/FMC/a10-1.html (this address is case sensitive). I checked this out myself and found the replacement cost for an F-22 is quoted at \$87.5M (w/o CD player ☹). Engine replacement figures are listed in the Air Force Master Item Identification Database (D043A), whatever the heck that is... I got the term from 91-204, but I couldn't find D043A on the web. Try calling the program office for engine figures. The D043A figures should be used even if the engine isn't totally trashed, as long as it has to be returned to the depot for repair. Hey, these aren't my rules. Obviously, 91-204 had way too many lawyers involved in writing it.

But not to worry... DLA doesn't classify mishaps anyway. We have no mishap "investigation" responsibilities other than what's required to administer the contracts. That is, we ensure the contractor reports IAW the contract. That doesn't mean you have to write Mishap Investigation Reports for your contractor (assuming AFI 91-204 is on contract). It means you have to review the contractor's report for accuracy, for the program office. Even if you've been to one of the Service's Accident Investigation

schools, your responsibilities in this area aren't that great.

Here's a little background information on why things are the way they are, for us...

Und zen, when quantum space-time folds in upon itself, a singularity is created, where, if there is a fatality involving DoD or non-DoD personnel, ve have ze chunditions where reportability therefore exists... but obviously relative to ze \$16 per man hour limit.



In this rare 1938 photo, Albert Einstein explains his controversial Special Relativity Theory of Hyper-spatial Mishap Reportability.

Under DoDI 6055.7, the basic requirement is... "Each Head of a DoD Component, or designee, shall...Develop procedures to ensure that mishaps that occur as a result of a Government contractor's operations in which there is reportable damage are investigated and reported. This includes non delivered equipment for which the Government has assumed responsibility."

This means the Services are responsible for ensuring some sort of process exists for investigating contractor mishaps. However, the Services realize that they can't just dump the mishap investigation responsibility on DLA because we don't have the resources. So, under the terms of "The Tri-Service Agreement on Procedures for Support/Accomplishment of Flight Test and

Acceptance, Flight Operations, and Flight Safety,” the Services retain mishap investigation responsibility.

I realize I’ve strayed somewhat from your original question but I wanted you to know that the reasons we do, what we do, as far as mishap investigation, notification, and reporting is concerned, comes firstly from the DoDI, which affects all the Services and DLA, and secondly from the Tri-Service Agreement. Besides, according to the Air Force Pilot Prioritization Plan I have 25% more time on my hands than I know what to do with, so I do tend to dawdle.

Our next question comes from Major Randon C. Stewart, from DCMC Boeing, Seattle, to Lt Col Frank Baily. Major Stewart’s question,

Lt Col Scotty Fairbairn (from the Joint Strike Fighter group) and I had a discussion the other day about the Ground and Flight Risk Clause (G&FRC) versus the Flight Risk Clause (FRC). The FRC is on the X-32, Boeing contract. Interestingly enough, as a side note, I learned that the \$25,000 deductible is not a player under this clause, but rather a \$100K cutoff point to determine reimbursement.

It is our understanding (per DFAR 228.370) that this is the correct clause for the cost plus fixed fee developmental contract that has been awarded for this program. It is also our reading that surveillance by the APT will not begin until ground or flight operations take place since there is no discussion of “in the open” in either the flight risk clause or the specific contract. Furthermore, the FRC does not address when the clause kicks into affect. However, DLAM 8210.1 states that the GFR duties include surveillance of “aircraft ground and flight operations” with ground

operations being defined as including towing, subsystem warm-up/checkout, engine runs, etc. Therefore, as we read it, the program should not expect any surveillance, as it stands, until ground operations begin. Do you concur? 🙋

This was my response... I think the “in the open” term still applies for the Flight Risk Clause because of the DLAM. It has to do with ‘when is an aircraft, an aircraft?’ and therefore, when do aircraft operations commence? As I’ve always read the G&FRC *and* FRC to generally mean, an aircraft is an aircraft when an engine, portion of a wing or a wing is attached to a fuselage of the aircraft. In addition, the Clause takes effect when it’s an aircraft and it’s in the open for the first time. That’s also when the DLAM becomes effective. That is, until both those conditions occur, the GFR has no role. So, don’t be confused by the title, the FRC does apply to ground operations once these two conditions are met, and once the FRC applies, the DLAM, and everything that comes with it, applies.



Major Stewart’s predecessor was from the “Old School” when it came to dealing with contractor issues.

Unfortunately, things are never very black and white in flight ops. There is a very special circumstance here. The procuring command has modified the FRC. Normally,

there is no deductible in the FRC at all and, for both clauses there is no in-flight deductible. In his case, when the procuring office decided to modify the FRC they did so for some reason that we're not privy to. The GFR needs to ask the program office what their intent was and, how and when, *they* want the DLAM to apply. He should get their interpretation in writing.

The Tri-Service regulation describes how, *under normal circumstances*, the DoD wants to manage the risk it assumes with the G&FRC and FRC. Again, *under normal circumstances*, the DoD wants a GFR overseeing all aircraft ground and flight operations. Again, the GFR just needs to confirm what exactly it is that the program office wants. While he's at it, he should also talk with the contractor and make sure they're clear on who's assuming risk and when they're assuming it, and pray the aircraft isn't damaged during that point in the contract when the FRC isn't in effect. Without a G&FRC or FRC in effect, liability becomes a dark foreboding territory where angels and GFRs fear to tread. I have no idea what an X-32 costs (less than a B-2, bigger than a breadbox), but whenever the Government is assuming the risk of loss, the FRC and G&FRC are the appropriate vehicles to manage that risk. And, they require GFR involvement.

I received the following inquiry and resolution from LT Michael R. Rein, DCMD East's GFR,

California Microwave, Incorporated (CMI), in Hagerstown, MD, is a small contractor which has a non-resident GFR. Their contract deals with Dash 7s, Army four-engine transport airplanes, which are used in the electronic warfare arena.

Their original, approved procedures required that noncrewmembers who "*frequently participate in flight operations*" were to, among other things, to "*maintain an FAA class I, II, or III physical.*" Upon recent contractor review of its procedures, CMI requested the elimination of this requirement, citing cost concerns.

This issue is addressed in AR 95-20, Vol1 (Nov 1991) in Section 3-8, Noncrewmembers Requirements. AR 95-20's flying requirements include "*current military or FAA flight physical, as determined by the Service, if required.*" This statement is somewhat ambiguous¹ (i.e., *if required*), and this article will delineate the major arguments which could be made on both sides of the issue.

GFRs should have the latitude to apply common sense to their particular situations, and in this case to *require* or *not require* it.² This case involves a transport-class aircraft, which CMI does not plan to fly above 15,000 feet MSL (i.e., a relatively benign flight environment).³ GFRs are charged with protecting Government personnel and Government assets.⁴ Since CMI has no Government flight crewmembers or noncrewmembers, the GFR for CMI should not technically be concerned with noncrewmembers, except to the extent that they could directly or indirectly damage or cause harm to Government personnel (of which there are none) or Government aircraft.⁵ Since noncrewmembers are not, by definition, integral to the operation of the aircraft, the GFR does not need to regulate them.⁶ By eliminating a costly and non-critical procedure, the GFR would effectively save the Government money through lower contractor overhead.⁷ A current flight physical for noncrewmembers would be an excellent idea, but it could be argued that in this case, is not required by the GFR.

On the other side of the coin, AR 95-20 could be interpreted as requiring contractors to abide by the requirements of whichever Service for which the contract is written.⁸ This is an Army contract, and Army Regulations require noncrewmembers to have current flight physicals. Additionally, in the event of a mishap where a noncrewmember is unable to egress under his/her own power and is killed, it is possible for the GFR to be faulted for not requiring a flight physical of that noncrewmember.⁹ It is even conceivable that the Government would absorb the cost to the contractor for the loss and replacement of the noncrewmember.¹⁰ Therefore, it could be argued that CMI noncrewmembers should be required to maintain current flight physicals.



Things begin to go radically wrong when the contractor's pilots decide to ignore the advice of their GFR and start relying on the advice from their so *called* friends, Mr. & Mrs. 2,000 lb. Bombs.

In this case, the GFR elected the conservative route and required that CMI noncrewmembers maintain current flight physicals.¹¹

My response... You got to love guys (without asking or telling) who resolve their own problems. However, I do have a few remarks to make on this subject, see above for footnote references.

¹Duh! Ambiguity is our motto...Grey is our color.

²They do.

³“Does not plan”, or “is restricted to flight below?”, there is a difference.

⁴I like to think we have a few more responsibilities.

⁵There are too many things wrong with this statement to discuss here.

⁶Ditto for this statement.

⁷Insert trite remark here like, “I’m supposed to save money?”

⁸This is not exactly true. Contractors should operate IAW the terms of the contract, and in a reasonable, safe, and effective manner.

⁹I don’t think so.

¹⁰Not according to the Ground and Flight Risk Clause subparagraph (d)(4).

¹¹That’s exactly what I would do.

I like to kid LT Rein, because he’s Navy and, of course, what... do I need another reason? But, the important thing here is Mike’s thorough review of the issues. I agree, AR 95-20 is unfortunately, very vague in many areas. When the particular passage Mike mentions was written, the intent was just as he states, “...*if required*...” means if the owning Service does it this way, so should the contractor. I caution the reader here because while it clearly applies here, this rule of thumb does not apply universally throughout the regulation.

Another way of looking at this particular problem (and I use this rule of thumb all the time) is, it’s reasonable to assume that the physicals are required because this is an Army aircraft and an Army contract and that’s what the Army does. The difference here is the “reasonableness test”. We’re not asking the contractor to do something that is excessive or exorbitant. We’re not picking a

standard out of the blue. If there was another standard available that applied to this situation, one could argue that there might be a better way of doing business, but in this case, there isn't. The other Services' instructions aren't applicable. To do

anything other than using the existing guidance from the Army would open the door to saying, "What other Army directives can I ignore because I don't want to follow them?"

The following is not the most pleasant subject we've covered. This article was suggested during the AFMC Pemco visit mentioned earlier. During the Pre-Mishap Plan review we realized there were gaps in our coverage of this fortunately rare process (those readers who felt they needed this service after reading my "ORM Confidential" article, notwithstanding). This article bridges that gap.-- ed.

CASUALTY NOTIFICATIONS

-Lt Col Russ Waddell

“Sir, we've got an aircraft down!” just a short sentence that precedes the most challenging days in a unit's existence. We exercise the initial mishap response plan to minimize injury and damage as part of our recurring training. We tend to ignore the more unpleasant consequences of a downed aircraft. This article will focus on the personal aspects of an accident and how flight ops personnel and their commanders can prepare themselves for casualty notification. While we hope to never hear or give the notification that begins “On behalf of the Chief of Staff, it is with deep regret that I inform you...” the tragic reality is that fatal accidents do occur. The need to prepare can be best summed up with the reminder that there will only be one chance to make that notification, it has to be done right the first time.

As part of mishap response planning, the unit commander should be prepared to make the casualty notifications to families in the immediate area. The Services will assign casualty notification officers to make those notifications in other areas. The DD Form 93, *Record of Emergency Data*, will be a key document during the notification process. Copies of the DD form 93 should be available at the unit, and a periodic review a part of the unit's procedures. Along with the information on the form, ensure there are maps with adequate instructions available to help locate the families. Examine your unit's process for keeping telephone numbers and addresses up to date. With good maps and addresses the notification team can focus on more important things than worrying about going to the wrong address. Because many of our units are geographically separated, part of the commander's preparation should include reviewing who will makeup the notification team. Use the experience of the team's chaplains and medical personnel to help develop a notification plan. The casualty assistance representative at the nearest military installation will also be able to identify additional resources available to the unit commander. If you're part of the team plan out how you'll get to your (Class A) service dress uniform and what vehicle the team will use. The right vehicle of choice is a military sedan, if you have access to one. If not, consider whether your own car will be appropriate, otherwise you'll need a rental car.

For the actual notification I offer some general guidance. Avoid overwhelming the family with too much information during the initial visit. Limit this visit to notifying the next of kin, offering official condolences, satisfying any immediate needs for assistance, and letting the family know further assistance will be provided. If the mishap involves several notifications, such as with a crew aircraft, be prepared for the next of kin to be aware of the mishap before you arrive. **Review the Service guidance**, and while notification should not be scripted, you should stick with the facts as you know them. **Do not discuss benefits**, leave this to the counselors. Tell the family that Service representatives will contact them to discuss specifics. If at all possible when it's time to depart, **do not leave the next of kin by themselves**. Offer to contact a friend, neighbor, or relative to be with them. This is the time when other families in the unit can begin to provide assistance.

Any aircraft mishap that involves casualties will generate immediate widespread interest. The media, your unit, the families, and the safety board will all be looking for answers and information of one kind or another. Also remember, because of the small size of most DCMC units, you can expect all of your unit's personnel to be deeply affected by the mishap. Be prepared for this. Many families request to visit the crash site. This is a common request that often allows the families to achieve closure in dealing with their grief. However, accommodating this request is way out of the scope of this article. **Do not make promises and do not take sides on this issue**. This should be decided by your commander after referring with DCMC legal personnel and the mishap board.

To handle the press, determine where your Public Affairs support comes from. These trained personnel can shift the burden of dealing with the media, off the commander.

In the days following the mishap, keeping an open flow of information is critical. Consider setting up a command center to share information with the families, help answer their questions and meet their assistance needs. Tasks for the command center may include rumor control, arranging food and housing for out of town guests, coordinating media requests, and most importantly, insuring that requests from the families don't get lost. Don't hesitate to ask for assistance from the Command or a nearby unit. This may include personnel to help man the command center.

Advance planning of this entire process will help immensely. Coordinate your plan with the nearest military facility; they should be the ones providing support. Include the names and phone numbers of the POCs in your mishap plan and review this information periodically. Also, discussing the casualty notification portion of the unit's mishap response plan during a commander's call can build a set of common expectations and identify unit specific requirements.

This article has touched on some of the key factors in casualty response. For more information as you review your own situation, the following resources provide much more in-depth coverage on the subject. I particularly recommend the commander's guide available for download from the AFPC homepage at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/causalty/your.htm.

Other Resources--

DODI 1300.9-- Military Personnel
Casualties Notification and Assistance
to Next of Kin
DLAR 1436.3-- Injury/Death of DLA
Civilian Employees
AR 600-8-1-- Army Casualty
Operation/Assistance/Insurance
AFI 36-3002-- Casualty Services
AFI 36-2102-- Personnel Affairs Information
and Assistance

BURPERS instruction 17770.3
Commandant Naval District Washington
Note 1770
MILPERSMAN 42101100
MCO P3040.4d-- Marine Corps Casualty
procedures Manual

Fly safe!

Flight Ops Guide to USAF GFR Officer Performance Reports Part 2...

--Lt Col John Heib

Welcome to Episode II (The PRF Menace) of my essay on performance reports (just consider the Reports article in Edition VII as a prequel). As a reminder, for those of you who read Part 1 but can't remember it because you were coming down from a donut induced sugar high, we're talking here, about Air Force performance reports. Even so, there are many truths that follow that even squids, grunts, and jarheads can benefit from. Also, the same Universal Guidelines from Part 1 that applied for Officer Performance Reports (OPRs), apply doubly for Promotion Recommendation Forms (PRFs), i.e. spelling, punctuation, use of technobabble, etc.

The PRF Concept. Army and Navy performance reports show where officers rank amongst their peers. The Air Force used to have a similar system called, "Controlled OERs." And, the Air Force is still dealing with the multiple lawsuits brought by officers that were burned by that particular '70s experiment. Current Air Force OPRs just stick to the facts... that is,

what the officer did during the reporting period. The practical upshot of this is, everyone can have a good OPR *as long as they performed well during the reporting period*. Who your organizational peers are, and where they belong on the Einsteinian IQ ladder is irrelevant. Army and Navy performance reports, with their Alpha Male Pyramids, and Centers of Mass concepts are only vaguely analogous to Air Force PRF Promote/Definitely Promote blocks. I say only *vaguely analogous* because the narrative portion of the PRF is just as important *if not more so*, than which block is X'd. Commanders must use the entire PRF to properly identify and recommend officers with the potential to succeed at the next higher grade, to the promotion boards. True racking and stacking of officers amongst their peers only comes into play during the promotion board process.

PRFs also differ from standard performance reports in other ways. First, PRFs cover accomplishments throughout an officer's career not just from the last reporting period. And secondly, PRFs are temporary records. Once the board meets and makes their decision on who gets promoted and who gets left behind, the PRF is removed from the officers' records. To paraphrase the exorcist from Poltergeist, "This officer's record is *clean* now."

The Basics. The purpose of a PRF is to communicate your commander's recommendation directly to the promotion board. If you're an Air Force officer the PRF could be the single most important piece of paper in your career depending on your career path and OPR history.

Important PRF Writing Tip: *Find a Colonel/Lt Col who has a lot of experience writing PRFs (someone with a successful track record), and ask him/her take a look at your draft before you forward it to your boss for his cut.* At this point I should also mention that we'd be happy to provide comments on your draft PRFs, especially for those in-the-zone... after all, we're always looking for a good laugh. I'm kidding, I'm kidding. Also since they won't have time to review this before it goes to print, Major Andy Chappell and CDR Mark Feallock cheerfully volunteer to look at your Army/Navy performance report drafts.

As I mentioned earlier, your typical PRF covers accomplishments *throughout* an officer's career, which show depth, breath, and readiness for the next grade. It shouldn't be just a recap of the officer's most recent OPR. It should demonstrate progression. Focus on performance, not credentials.

Promote – Definitely Promote. Also known as a "P" or a "DP". Your commander uses a P/DP to signal to the board how earnest he/she is about promoting you. There is also a "Do Not Promote this Board" block which is rarely used... usually reserved for heroin addicts and those who believe professional wrestling is real 🤪. No need to elaborate on that block.



Archaeologists generally attribute The Great Kepo's meteoric rise to Lieutenant Demigod well ahead of his peers, to his natural good looks and superior PRF writing skills.

Only a limited number of DPs are given out. The percentages vary by rank and by year. Historically (meaning I seem to recall), the DP rate for Major is around 60%, 40% for Lt Col, and 25% for Colonel. The DP rate is always lower than the promotion rate, which again, varies by rank and year. Currently, it's about 90% for Major, 70% for Lt Col, and 40% for Colonel.

You may have heard that getting a DP is a virtual guarantee of promotion. Not so Kemosabe. The high promotion rate of DPs is more a sign of how well the P/DP system works. Look at it this way, you have 10 guys going up for Major. This gives you 6 DPs to distribute. Who are you going to give your 6 DPs to? Probably your six best. The six with the best chance of promotion anyway. All things being equal, the board will probably rank your 10 the same way, i.e., your six best will probably make it, along with the next best three out of the four remaining. Obviously, the system isn't perfect, but it seems to work out pretty close. But here's the bottom line, if an officer's record does not rate a promotion, getting a DP will not significantly improve his/her chances, further, if an officer's record clearly rates a promotion, getting a Promote won't significantly decrease his/her chances

either. To put it even clearer, you are promoted based more on your record than on which block is X'd out.

Filling Out the AF Form 709

Block II and Block III. Same as in an OPR. Remember to ensure your DLA-Joint-Service-organization duties are written in terms the board can relate to.

Block IV. Promotion Recommendation. This is the PRF body. It should focus on how well you've performed/progressed during your entire career. It also includes your Commander's recommendations for your future. Your commander should make a written recommendation for promotion as well as marking the appropriate block. This is the general format most PRFs follow,

- First line: Superlative + how your commander rates you + written promotion recommendation (this can be placed in last line)
- Middle lines: The top things you've done for the Air Force that best demonstrate steady career progression, job knowledge, \$\$ saved, and LEADERSHIP.
- Include line about LEADERSHIP.
- Not to harp too much on this LEADERSHIP thing, but ensure you include the term somewhere in your PRF.
- Last line: Solid wrap up with recommendation for PME. Add written promotion recommendation if not done in first line.

To effectively demonstrate results, I highly recommend you follow the "input and output" rule for each middle bullet, similar to Block IV of an OPR.



Look, I'm not saying we should promote the guy. I'm just saying you have to admire the Rater's bold use of the word "promulgates" in every line of the officer's PRF.

Here's another suggestion that might prove useful to some of you. If you're ever complemented on the job you're doing by a General Officer or SES, quote them in your PRF. "Lt Col Jones' project is one of our great success stories!" -Lt Gen Spotsylvania. This works for writing OPRs also, but particularly well for PRFs. Start by taking a look at your earlier OPRs (or, if you're an old fart, OERs) and see if your additional rater (who was then a Colonel or Brigadier General) now happens to be an O-9 or O-10. What did they have to say about you six years ago?

Here are some example PRF lines I've accumulated throughout the years. I've purged them of any identifying information (please feel free to insert your own smart remark about how the rest of this article seemed to have gone through the same purging process). The *italicized* parts are my comments.

-Career responsibilities have been immense
--few other similar career paths could compare with his duties! Very weak.
Better: Topnotch officer! Best Major I have. In the top ten percent of all officers

who have ever worked for me. If I had one(or two or three) more DPs... The key here is have your commander rate you, where do you fit? Also note, only the first and last line in a PRF can (but not necessarily should) be free of specific accomplishments.

-Broad based career with rapid progressions in three combat aircraft: Stellar accomplishments in all Not bad, but rapid progression says it all, so instead of "Stellar..." list the aircraft, V-22, E-2, X-15.

-Commands an aviation team; mastered the X-X test aircraft; performs operations officer duties This sounds like a line that belongs in the job description area. The PRF must show HOW WELL you do your job... what are your accomplishments? What have you done for the Air Force? SHOW ME THE MONEY! "Input and Output"

-X-31 test pilot and modification expert; Direct support to NCA/Jt Staff commanding multiple missions OK, What's a modification expert? Try- STELLAR Aviator- Test Pilot for NCA/Jt Staff Command Aircraft, X missions and X aircraft delivered on time? or early? or cheaper?...Show some numbers.

-Career excellence as a distinguished graduate and with numerous outstanding performances on flight evals When how & many?

-Manager of ACME's military flight operations for U.S., NATO and X-15 aircraft

--Kept entire test operations on schedule and within costs under an umbrella of expertly handled safety parameters Fair line, but instead of under an umbrella..., maybe something like: ...with zero (reportable/flight/operational) mishaps during... Also "Leads DCMC ACME's military flight operations"



Bad line: -Eighth Air Force's number one windmill slayer

Better line: -Eighth Air Force's number one dragon slayer

-Definitely Promote! Does not waver under stress--leads where others would fail! A must for SSS! DEFINITELY PROMOTE! SENIOR LEADER in the making! A must for SSS!

-Best of all combinations for the 21st Century: Leader, Motivator, Team Player and Aviation Expert First line should convey to the board the number one impression your Commander wants the board to carry with them about you, i.e., how do you rate?

-DEFINITELY PROMOTE this officer this board, My number one Major, 21st Century officer: Leader, Mentor, Team Player & Skilled Aviator. Top 5 percenter on a fast track!

-Immense career responsibilities characterized by superior performances and rapid advancements This sentence could apply to anyone, and is therefore worthless. Also, I recommend using a Spellchecker before going final. That way you'll discover it's supposed to be "RESPONSIBILITIES!" Unless of course, the message your boss wants to convey to the board, is that his/her Spellchecker is on the fritz. Important editing tip: Ignore your Spellchecker's recommendation to replace "biosolids" with "bestialities" when commenting on accomplishments in the Environmental arena.

Boards want meat and lots of it, anyone can use a thesaurus. They only promote guys who have actually accomplished something. I might sound like a broken record but remember, the PRF is the most important piece of paper the promotion board sees. It should at least tell them some of the things you've done in your career.

-Led highly visible and selective positions commanding teams with Joint Staffs, HHQs and contractors *And, your telling me this because . . . ? The board will probably assume this particular officer was the captain of the Pentagon bowling team.*

-Driving force and test pilot for X-2/X-3 modifications ensuring these vital assets meet all warfighting roles *There's got to be a better way of describing this important job...-Test pilot/GFR. Driving force behind X-2/X-3 modification program. X aircraft delivered on time or ahead of schedule."* You can even expand this one with \$\$ saved. *Boards love dollars saved.*

-Devised the tactics used with night vision goggles and tested the weapons deployed for DESERT STORM *This is good, but there's lots of room to punch it up. Maybe, - Devised night vision goggle tactics used by (type aircraft) aircrews during Desert Storm (then add something about how well the tactics worked). As for tested the weapons..., are we talking about a new weapons system? If so say it. If not, big deal, you flew some ACF missions.*

-Definitely Promote! This astute officer belongs in a command postion. An absolute must for SSS! *Unlike an OPR, I don't know if you can make a statement about command in the PRF. This changes from year to year; make sure your PRF says the right thing your year. And what's a postion? Is that like some sort of subatomic particle... like maybe a positron? Great, you're in*

command of an atom, your mom must be very proud. Spelling errors can be FATAL!

One quick comment about superlatives, be very careful about trite expressions. Never use the same adjective/superlative to describe yourself, twice in the same PRF *or OPR*. My favorite terms, Leader, Led and Leadership, are exceptions to the above rule. I don't know what kind of signal your commander is sending to the board if at least one of these terms isn't present in your PRF, but I'm sure it isn't a good one.

That's about it for writing PRFs 🍌. I've heard some people say the we military types dwell too much on promotions and performance reports. Others may say, spending so much time on OPRs and PRFs is placing careerism over officership. Nothing could be further from the truth. Officers *should* be concerned about their records and promotions. If you don't take care of your career, who will? It should go without saying that you have to perform well in your job to actually have something in your record that will get you promoted. Unfortunately, performance isn't, by itself, enough... your record must accurately describe that performance. Remember, unlike our civilian counterparts, we have only one *really good shot* at getting promoted... when we're in the zone. Very few are promoted above or below the zone. Having one good shot at something that will effect your entire life, not to mention your future in the Service, tends to make one a little... what, obsessive? Deal with it. Ensuring your commander writes good OPRs and PRFs on you is not careerism, it's survival. To do otherwise is to put your career in someone else's hands.

Random Notes

Here are some other useful tips on effective writing that were sent to me recently.

How to Write Good by Sally Bulford

1. Avoid alliteration... always.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat.)
4. Employ the vernacular.
5. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
6. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
7. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
8. Contractions aren't necessary.
9. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
10. One should never generalize.
11. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
12. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
13. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. Be more or less specific.
15. Understatement is always best.
16. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
17. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
18. The passive voice is to be avoided.
19. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
20. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
21. Who needs rhetorical questions?
22. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

That's all
Folks 